



## NEWS RELEASE

United States Department Of Agriculture Rural Development  
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### **USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPATES IN LITTLE PRIEST TRIBAL COLLEGE EVENTS FOR LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING AND LIBRARY**

**Winnebago, Neb., September 2, 2004**—The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development presented a symbolic funding check of \$184,861 to the Little Priest Tribal College (LPTC) at the groundbreaking ceremony held today for the LPTC Liberal Arts Building. The funding will assist in the construction of this building that will help to provide continuing educational opportunities to the 1,447 Native Americans on the Winnebago Tribe reservation.

“USDA Rural Development is pleased to assist in the LPTC Liberal Arts Building which was needed to support the growth in student enrollment and to address the limitations of the existing facilities for classrooms and administrative staff,” stated Jolene Kasper, rural development specialist for USDA Rural Development. “The current facility, built in 1954 as a convent, is not conducive to a classroom setting and only accommodates 20 students. Additionally, the administrative space is limited to very small rooms shared by more than one faculty member.”

The new 8,000 square foot LPTC Liberal Arts Building will house 3 classrooms with a combined student capacity of 84. Each classroom will be equipped for the latest in teaching techniques including fiber optics and satellite. The facility will also feature a 96 seat lecture hall available for use by the general public for community meetings and conferences. Four faculty offices will be located in the building providing the privacy and quiet needed for teacher-student conferences and class preparation.

USDA Rural Development also participated in today’s grand opening ceremony for the Little Priest Tribal College-Winnebago Public Library. USDA Rural Development assisted with a \$335,000 grant for the construction of the library that serves as both a community college library and a public library to over 1,100 patrons.

“Libraries provide a wealth of information and support the need for continued learning,” stated Kasper. “The Little Priest Tribal College-Winnebago Public Library is open to community students and residents to provide materials and services that will assist them in meeting their personal, educational and professional information needs.”

The college's existing library did not meet the standards for a community college library in terms of standard core circulating collections, seating space, staff numbers or services. The 2,600 square foot facility, originally designed to serve as a laundry facility for the Mission School, was very old and not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The work and study spaces for the patrons were confining and the shelves overcrowded with books.

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The library needed roof repairs as witnessed by the sagging ceiling (propped up with a 2 X 6) and large ceiling hole. Lack of dependable and energy efficient infrastructure caused the library high heating and cooling bills.

The new 7,000 square foot complex has allowed the library to expand its present standard core of circulating collections from 12,000 to 80,000. This new ADA compliant college and public facility features space for classrooms, public meetings, a separate children's reading area, comfortable reading and study areas, workspaces for staff, and a hospitality center.

The USDA grants were provided via the Tribal College Initiative through the USDA Rural Development Community Facility Grant program. For additional information contact Jolene Kasper, [jolene.kasper@ne.usda.gov](mailto:jolene.kasper@ne.usda.gov), 1909 Vicki Lane Suite 103 Norfolk, Neb. 68701 or phone (402) 371-5350, (402) 437-5093 (TDY). Visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/ne/>.

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